

California State University, Fullerton

Contact: Jahna Kahrhoff
Director, Distance Education
714-278-4651
jkahrhoff@fullerton.edu

Summary. Using its reliable, flexible, and cost-effective ITFS system, California State Fullerton (CSUF) trains teachers and nurses during a time of shortage, gives educational opportunities to a diverse and dispersed community of learners, and delivers courses to corporate sites to help workers stay competitive. Since 1986, a network of five ITFS channels have been the backbone of Cal State Fullerton's outreach to 900 learners a week in Southern California. In addition, ITFS programming is available on the region's cable companies, providing enriching cultural programming 24 hours a day.

The elimination of ITFS would severely hamper CSUF's ability to achieve its goal of bringing educational opportunities to a diverse community of learners. In addition, it would cause the loss of almost \$4 million invested in equipment and technical expertise; require an expensive reinvestment in new technologies; end a substantial revenue stream used to support distance learning; and create enormous disruptions in classes available to students.

Distance Learning for Credit and Career Development. CSUF is largely a commuter college, and runs several satellite campuses. Students at these off-campus sites rely on ITFS-delivered courses to complete degree program requirements in such areas as engineering, communication, nursing, business, history, religion, and more. Professionals at area corporate locations, such as Boeing and Raytheon, participate in timely training opportunities and learn important job skills essential to keep these workers competitive.

The following are just a few examples of special programs offered by CSUF that have targeted the unique needs of specific populations in southern California:

- In-service training for K-12 teachers at their work sites with necessary continuing education course work for their credentials. ITFS courses cut down on substitute time, easing the burden on already strained local school budgets.
- Early college course enrollment for high school students provided at their high school locations.
- Course enrollment at military facilities for staff improvement at those facilities.
- Advanced Engineering course work delivered to industrial sites throughout southern California
- ESL courses delivered to schools, adult education facilities, and work places.

ITFS: Making Distance Learning Cost Effective. The current ITFS system is the only practical and cost effective way for CSUF to deliver valuable and timely educational programs throughout southern California. Sites can be set up quickly, with relatively little cost compared to competing technologies. For example, a new, non-university, codec

site would cost nearly \$40,000 for equipment and connectivity to the network, and additional annual costs of approximately \$18,000 for fiber connectivity. On the other hand, with ITFS, there is a one-time installation cost of \$2,300 with no annual fees. As a result, CSUF is able to respond flexibly and promptly to changing learning requirements, offering engineering courses at an industrial site one semester and nursing courses at a hospital the next. This flexibility is a key component of CSUF's plans to keep up with the face of change in Southern California's economy.

An Investment in Education. Cal State Fullerton stands to lose almost \$4 million invested in its current ITFS system if it loses its license. These monies have been used to build and equip television classrooms, a television studio, network operations center, and to pay for thousands of hours of expert labor. If ITFS technology were no longer available CSUF would have to suspend delivery of credit courses, rebuild classrooms to accommodate other means of delivery, expand landline network capabilities, and make major investments in training and development. Local businesses that rely on the ITFS network would also be hit with significant costs. Also, CSUF gets a substantial revenue stream from leasing its excess ITFS capacity. That revenue directly supports the development and maintenance of distance learning programs and allows CSUF to continue to expand and bring its unique resources to an ever-growing community of learners.

A Dynamic, Expanding Program. The university is currently planning several additional off-campus sites and new distance education programs, all of which will utilize ITFS for course delivery. For example, because of an alarming shortage of nurses, the Cal State Fullerton Nursing program is expanding its degree programs in southern California to meet the direct needs of the community. ITFS will provide healthcare organizations the opportunity to become part of our delivery network immediately, at low cost, to take advantage of this timely and essential program.